



## Board of Selectmen

Date of Meeting: Monday, January 29, 2018  
Location: Town Hall, 221 Main Street  
Time: 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM  
Members Present: Chairman James Wood; Michael May; Marty McNamara, Town Administrator;  
April C. Steward, Administrative Assistant to the Board; Stephen Madaus; Town Counsel

The meeting commenced at 6:30 PM.

Financial Warrants were signed in agreement.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Joint Meeting T/A Search Committee with BOS:** Members Present: Joseph Flanagan; David Marzo; Scott McCubrey; Brian Gaucher. Members Absent: Lindsay Katz; Laurie Benson  
Martin McNamara presented the committee with a packet for each of the members. It included a time line for the search committee to follow along, the job description, a memorandum from town counsel delineating the legal requirements of the search process. Joe Flanagan inquired how many candidates were the BOS looking to interview. The answer was three finalists. The search Committee would like to interview around 10 candidates. The search committee has been given the liberty to develop their own process to evaluate and pick the top three candidates as they see fit. The BOS appreciates the members' willingness to volunteer for the committee.

**School Committee Regionalization Subcommittee Meeting with BOS and FinCom:** This group came in tonight to give the BOS and update on the progress of their work in looking onto a unified school district. In evaluating PARCC test results there is a big discrepancy between the test scores. It is the belief of the regionalization subcommittee that if there was a standardized curriculum that both elementary schools were following the discrepancy would not be as noticeable.

Some of the benefits of regionalization are curriculum alignment, and the opportunity to move resources between the two schools. Karen Molnar, Director of Pupil Services, has cited that if a student with special needs moves into the district, the shared responsibility would disperse the cost more evenly and more resources would be available. Teachers would need to be brought into alignment, and communities would still be guaranteed control over their elementary schools. They do not have to follow statutory form when they are budgeting allocated costs.

What they decided to go with is a budgetary method that has recently been approved by DESE in the Mt. Greylock School District. And that is a budgetary method that allows each community to maintain budgetary control over their elementary school, but still receive the benefits of a fully regionalized school district.

The school committee would still have 3 members from each community that would be voted on by both communities in biennial fall elections, which is required by statute for the model that they chose.

Regionalization will bring with it a great level of efficiency, and will benefit the children in their educational pursuits and achievements.

Financials were discussed with the estimated impact to towns being an increase of \$33,364 to the Town of Boylston and a reduction of (\$13,901) to the Town of Berlin.

The subcommittee has actually not yet voted on what their recommendation to the school committee will be, although they feel they have a clear sense that this is what they will be recommending to the school committee for regionalization.

Marty was concerned over what impact this would have on the towns' health plan because all of those teachers would be pulled off of the town plan and brought onto the plan that the region has. Lorie wondered why the town employees would expect to have the same benefits as the teachers do when none of their salaries, wages, and benefits are similar anyways. Lorie stated that Berlin had the same question and in

looking into it they said it wouldn't impact the town employees' plans in Berlin. Marty also stated that back in 2011 the insurance advisory committee decided to pay a higher out of cost plan and keep the better benefits and he is wondering if now the teachers' would be going to a plan with lower coverages.

Mike May wanted to know about the Mt. Greylock example. What has their three year outlook/performance on their testing scores been like working underneath this budgetary model? Is Greylock the only school district that is using this model? Mt. Greylock has just been approved for this model so there is no data to answer that question. Mike would like to see improvements for the kids educationally, but he is unsure if you start moving around resources that the kids will all benefit equally. Will you still see improvements under this different budgetary model? Currently Berlin has a higher cost per pupil, yet their test scores are lower. Mike expressed some concern with the resource sharing aspect with the elementary school budgets remaining separate. The Superintendent would like to see the word resources be changed to equivalent services. For instance, a Title I Grant is to provide services to students who have the most challenges. If you are regionalized you can share those services and those services are what is going to help bring the child up. You want to make sure that at the time of graduation each student has had equivalent services all the way up. Ideally the change from elementary school to middle school will become smoother if all students are on the same path. Right now, students can lose up to six months in learning due to bumpy transitions. When they graduate, is the student going to be in a better position if the two schools regionalize. It is better for the students if they can transition faster and lose less time on learning. Mike asked the Superintendent if the individual budgets for the elementary schools are concerning to him. He still feels that you can have equivalent services with individual budgets. Mike has additional questions but will ask at a later time.

**Deliver Budgets & ATM Articles to BOS and FinCom:** FinCom was given the Budget binders for the next fiscal year. They were also given the results of the salary study provided to us by the Edward Collins Center to help aid them in budget requests and salary increases that have been received. Most of our staff are currently at the same pay if not higher than others in the area. Budget items were discussed, but FinCom needs to dig in and take a look at all of the requests before any decisions can be made. They will begin meeting with the departments in town in the upcoming weeks.

#### **Report of the Town Administrator to the Board of Selectmen:**

- ***Elmwood Place Parcel:*** We have extended the deadline for the closing on the sale of the Elmwood Place parcel. There is some question regarding the boundaries of the property and we are attempting to get those issues ironed out.
- ***Sewell Street Gravel Pit:*** We have also extended the deadline on the sale of the Gravel Pit on Sewell Street. That sale was contingent on the purchaser getting approvals for the project. The purchaser is beginning that process with the various town boards. Once the approvals are granted, we can close on the sale.
- ***Street Light on Stiles Road:*** I notified the Light Department that the board approved one additional street light on Stiles Road. They will install the light ASAP.
- ***Senior Van Drivers:*** Another new Senior Van Driver has been hired and will be starting this week. Council on Aging Coordinator Laura Susanin, and the COA Van Scheduler Olga Olmedo have also attended driver training. We now have 6-7 van drivers and we are seeing some increased usage of the van.
- ***Parks and Recreation Coordinator:*** An offer has been made to an individual for the Parks and Recreation Coordinator Position. Once the physical and CORI check are completed the individual can begin working.
- ***MMA Annual Conference:*** April Steward attended the MMA Annual Conference last weekend in Boston. She took part in a number of seminars and received some very valuable information.
- ***Library Renovation Phase III:*** The Library is planning to go forward with Phase III of their renovation project. They have a balance of some \$260K in their construction balance that was approved at the Annual Town Meeting. The way that the article was written it allows them to continue the project without

requiring further town meeting approvals. Library Trustee, Brad Barker, has indicated his willingness to come before the board to update you on the project if you so desire.

- ***New Office space at Town Hall:*** Facilities Manager, Bob Bourassa, has begun a project that will give the Council on Aging Coordinator, and the Scheduler more office space that is much more private than it was in the past. The COA deals with considerable confidential information, and the previous office area was right out in the open with little, if any privacy. Bob is converting space in the area that is the mailroom/cafeteria. The Administrative Assistant's office will be a little bigger, and the Town Accountant will be moving into another office that is being built there. This will allow the COA to expand their office space a little bit and provide much needed privacy.

Mike May wanted to take the time to acknowledge all of the work April Steward has done in the administrative role she is currently holding and really appreciates the added value that she has brought to the BOS office.

*At 8:00 PM Jamie Underwood motioned to adjourn; Mike May seconded; voted all in favor.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
April C. Steward, Assistant to the Board of Selectmen

### **Meeting Materials**

Agenda	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
Meeting Sign-In Sheet	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
TA Report	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office
Regionalization Paperwork	On file in Board of Selectmen's Office